



Dam and Lake in Ribeira Secca Best Birding Place



15 min taxi to an improvised cafe overlooking the new dammed lake.

From there walk over the dam, circle clock-wise around the lake, keeping close to the water. 2hrs around, sometimes slippery, don't trample over plantations, steep climb up at the end.

The dam was completed in 2006 with Chinese cooperation and has since caused a considerable increase in irrigated land around it. But until now water is pumped up instead of letting it run down through a system of canals. This distribution system might be built in the next few years.



The lake, the fields and bushes around have immediately become a bird paradise. Especially the critically endangered endemic Purple Heron *Ardea purpurea* which breeds in nearby Ribeira Montanha (15 min more by taxi) might profit from it. So do Grey Heron *Ardea cinerea*, Cattle Egret *Bubulcus ibis*, Little Egret *Egretta garzetta*. Glossy Ibis *Plegadis falcinellus* is a rare visitor.

Blackwinged Stilt *Himantopus himantopus*, Greenshank *Tringa nebularia*, Wood Sandpiper *Tringa glareola* are almost certainly there.



Passerinho *Halcyon leucocephala* is abundant. Cape Verde Swamp-Warbler *Acrocephalus brevipennis*, Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla* and Spectacled Warbler *Sylvia conspicillata* are in the bushes around the lake together with flocks of Common Waxbill *Estrilda astrild*.

Rock Pidgeon *Columbia livia* normally rest in a flock on a rock-face on the north side of the lake.

Osprey *Pandion haliaetus* circles above.

Beautiful views towards the „Organ Pipes“, Orgaos, and the highest mountain on Santiago, Pico do Antonia, 1400m. Cool drinks in the cafe at the end!

